

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. A patient controlled medication delivery apparatus comprising:  
an activation switch;  
a medication storage subsystem for storing a plurality of prescribed amounts of medication;  
an interval timer coupled to said medication storage subsystem;  
10 a patient identification and verification system coupled to said medication storage subsystem; and  
a medication delivery subsystem wherein in response to said interval timer reaching an end of a predetermined time interval, said patient verification system verifying an identity of a patient and said activation switch being engaged said medication delivery subsystem delivers a  
15 prescribed amount of said medication.
2. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a recorder coupled to said medication storage subsystem, said recorder recording a time when said prescribed amount of medication was delivered to said patient.  
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3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said patient verification system comprises a personal identification number (PIN) system.
4. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a timer locking mechanism coupled between  
25 said interval timer and said medication delivery subsystem, said timer locking mechanism locking said medication delivery subsystem when said interval timer has not elapsed, and unlocking said medication delivery subsystem when said interval timer has elapsed.
5. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a patient verification locking mechanism  
30 coupled between said patient verification subsystem and said medication delivery subsystem, said patient verification locking mechanism locking said medication delivery subsystem when

said patient verification system has not verified the identification of a patient, and unlocking the lock on said medication delivery subsystem when said patient verification system has verified the identification of a patient.

- 5     6.     The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said activation switch includes at least one indicator light.
7.     The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said at least one indicator light of said activation switch lights in at least one of a first color when said timer has elapsed and a second color when said  
10     timer has not elapsed.
8.     The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising an alarm, said alarm coupled to said interval timer and wherein said alarm provides an indication when said interval timer has elapsed.
- 15     9.     The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said medication delivery subsystem includes a piston assembly coupled between said activation switch and said medication storage subsystem.
10.     The apparatus of claim 9 wherein said piston assembly comprises:  
a hollow piston having a cutting edge at a distal end thereof for engaging said medication  
20     storage subsystem; and  
a solid piston movably disposed within said hollow piston for engaging said medication storage subsystem.
11.     The apparatus of claim 9 wherein said hollow piston includes a first detent for receiving a  
25     portion of a timer locking mechanism therein.
12.     The apparatus of claim 11 wherein said hollow piston includes a second detent for receiving a portion of a patient identification locking mechanism therein.
- 30     13.     A method of patient-controlled medication delivery comprising:  
(a) verifying an identification of a patient for whom a prescribed medication is intended;

(b) providing a first prescribed amount of a medication for the patient, wherein said patient determines a time to start taking said prescribed amount of the medication;

(c) waiting a predetermined time interval, said time interval starting from the time the intended patient last took a prescribed amount of said medication;

5 (d) verifying the identification of the intended patient; and

(e) providing another prescribed amount of said medication for the intended patient.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said steps c, d, and e are repeated until the supply of medication is exhausted.

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15. The method of claim 13 wherein said providing a first prescribed amount of a medication further comprises recording information relating to a time said prescribed amount of medication was provided.

15 16. The method of claim 13 wherein said providing another prescribed amount of a medication further comprises recording information relating to the time said prescribed amount of medication was provided.

17. The method of claim 13 wherein said verifying the identification of an intended patient is  
20 done by way of a personal identification number (PIN) system.

18. The method of claim 13 wherein said medication comprises a medication taken orally.